County fund helps pay funeral costs for boy

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson recently authorized a $1,000 donation from the Oakland County Employees Casual Day Fund to help a Highland Township woman pay the funeral expenses for her 14-year-old son who was murdered in Flint's Bonner Park on June 19.

Michael Alan Carter and two friends were assaulted by a group of teens in Flint after hopping off a train they had boarded earlier in the evening in Highland Township. The trio had apparently planned on getting off in Holly, but missed the stop and ended up in a Flint switching yard. The teens were looking for a telephone when they ran into a Flint street gang. Carter was shot and killed, but his friends survived the attack.

"It's always tragic when someone dies, but especially so when the person is young and has his whole life ahead of him," Patterson said. "Our thoughts and prayers are with Michael's family at this very difficult time. It is our hope this check will help ease the financial burden on the family."

Patterson stressed that he is donating the $1,000 in the name of county employees who contribute one dollar every Friday to the Casual Day Fund for the privilege of wearing leisure clothes to work.

Michael's mother, Joan Boyce, has been a member of the kitchen staff in the cafeteria of the main building at the Oakland County Courthouse since October 1996.

So far in 1997, the payday Casual Days, which go to fund several charities during the Christmas holidays have raised $9,382.76.

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OAKLAND DIGEST

Oakland Digest provides a summary of headline stories from around the county during the past week.

BIRMINGHAM

Murder trial delayed: More than a year since the murder of his wife, Dr. Robert Iverson just wants to put it all behind him. He'll have to wait until Oct. 13 when the trial of Anitra Coomer, formerly of Troy, and McConnell Adams, Jr., formerly of Rochester Hills, is set to begin.

The two are charged with kidnapping Deborah Iverson, a Bloomfield Hills ophthalmologist, from a Birmingham municipal parking lot on May 16, 1996, and killing her as they drove through Rochester Hills.

Their trial, originally scheduled for this week, was delayed to allow a defense expert to examine whether the interrogation surrounding Adams' confession was properly conducted.

CLARKSTON

From grill to conoys: Pete and Ann Berishaj are moving cautiously but enthusiastically as they prepare to titillate local taste buds and convert Carol's Village Grill into a Motown Coney.

"Once I remodel the whole thing, we'll probably be open for dinner," said Pete Berishaj. "I want to do it right. Slowly." In the meantime, they have painted the interior and continue to serve Carol's menu.

FARMINGTON

Ice rink on tap: The ice age in Farmington Hills could spread if a proposed skating facility becomes reality. Farmington Hills-based Suburban Hockey wants to operate a training facility that would house two National Hockey League-size, 200-by-85 feet rinks in a former indoor tennis facility in the Freeway Park area. If the plan becomes reality, Farmington Hills will have four ice rinks compared to having none five years ago.

Bond drive upcoming: Though the date is not official, voters can pencil in a trip to the polls Sept. 16 for Farmington Public Schools' next bond election. The board will likely set the date at its July 22 meeting.

District officials plan to ask voters — in two separate ballot questions — to approve $95 million in bonds for facility improvements.

LAKE ORION

Bus parking lot expands: A move by the Lake Orion school district to expand its bus parking lot isn't expected to be popular with Lake Orion Village residents. The school district recently signed an agreement with Pontiac Osteopathic Hospitals to lease property it owns adjacent to the Lake Orion Nursing Center to expand the school district's bus parking facilities, superintendent Bob Bass said.

While the temporary solution may ease congestion for bus drivers, it may make it worse on Village of Lake Orion streets where, for years, residents have been complaining about the buses using and damaging local streets, according to village manager John Berchtold.

OXFORD

M-24 task force meeting: When M-24 communities sit down later this month to talk about ways to make the thoroughfare a safer and better road, there will be a new face at the table — the Oakland County Planning Department. "This is a significant first step in getting the county involved," Oakland County Commissioner Larry Obrecht said. Right now, with only the villages of Oxford and Lake Orion and the townships of Oxford and Lake Orion involved, it is a local project that won't gain as much attention.

ROCHESTER

Sidewalk sale: Thousands of people will browse downtown Rochester during Sidewalk Sales this week. But if you're going, don't worry about finding an open parking space. Some 13,000 or so will pound the pavement in search of bargains during the three-day event, which starts today.

The rest will park at www.rochester.mich.com, along the information highway. Harry Lee, president of Enterprise Expectations Systems, will lead a virtual tour of summer clearance and red tag sales through the Internet.

SOUTHFIELD

Woman kidnapped, robbed: A Southfield woman, 37, told Southfield police she was robbed, kidnapped and forced to drive to Detroit, shortly after she parked her car, intending to enter the Cold Spot party store, 21320 Evergreen about 5:40 p.m. July 8. The incident, which spanned about an hour, began when the suspect ordered her to back into her 1995 Chevy Lumina and demanded she drive to 10 Mile and Greenfield. The suspect stole the woman's jewelry and cash before exiting her car, police said.

TROY

Sports center delayed: The long-awaited Troy Sports Center didn't open July 7 as scheduled, but owners say the facility, with its three ice rinks, an indoor soccer field, a pro shop, a concession stand and John Warton's professional training center, will be open for sure the first week in August. The center is located at the northwest corner of Big Beaver and John R.

Delphi moving in soon: Workers are applying the finishing touches to Delphi Automotive System's new $50-million world headquarters and customer center in Troy as the company rolls toward an August move-in date. Some 500 employees will move in during three weekends starting Friday, Aug. 8.

WEST BLOOMFIELD

Swan song: As debate continues on Oakland County area lakes as to whether it's the swans annoying the jet skiers or vice versa, Commerce Township resident Shirley Green continues to witness swan injuries caused by boats and personal water crafts as well as mean-spirited tormenting of the birds. The Lower Straits Lake resident co-founded Save the Swans in 1992 with neighbors Russ and Tanya Knudsen.

To report harassment of or injuries to wildlife on the lakes call Oakland County Sheriff's Department Marine Division dispatch at (248) 858-4950 or Michigan Department of Natural Resources at (800) 292-7800.

Road to get face lift: In it's continuing efforts to elevate Walled Lake's image and appearance, the city's Downtown Development Authority has opted to give Pontiac Trail a second make-over. Two years ago the roadway medians were landscaped, but since have received complaints from residents and business owners about the Bayberry plants.

If the city council approves the second round of landscaping, the three-year project, which includes day lilies, is estimated to cost $23,000.

— Compiled by staff writer Jennifer Placinto

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